

MOSTLY CLOUDY

High: 44
Low: 34
20% chance
of rain



Sat.: Isolated rain, 55/33
Sun.: Partly cloudy, 58/34
Mon.: Scattered rain, 64/45

Complete weather: B10

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INSIDE TODAY PAGE D1

GO GUIDE

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PATIENTS SAY THEY'RE FRUSTRATED BY LONGER LINES, POOR SERVICE

MORE DETAILS



Atlanta

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AIRPORT DISTRICT

ATL Restaurant Week returns in March

Atlanta foodies are encouraged to save the date for the 7th Annual ATL Airport District Restaurant Week from Saturday, March 21, through Sunday, March 29.

During this eight-day culinary event, all local Atlantans, urban explorers and visitors to the area will have the opportunity to explore local restaurants of all kinds in College Park, East Point, Hapeville and Union City, according to a news release.

Participating restaurants will feature \$9, \$19 and \$29 prix fixe menus or signature dishes at a 20% discount during Restaurant Week. All menu prices will be valid for brunch, lunch and/or dinner and exclude alcohol, tax and gratuity. Guests can expect everything from classic, down-home Southern eats to plates that put a spin on any average meal.

A full list of 2020 participants will be announced soon.

Information: ATL.district.com

PAMELA MILLER FOR THE AJC



Poison

continued from B1

to spend next week making changes to Gov. Brian Kemp's proposed budget. Some of them see the cuts as undoing work they have built on for several years, such as improving mental health services.

Aides to Kemp and his commissioners said they are making necessary cuts in the face of budget setbacks. Public Health Commissioner Kathleen Toomey, whose department includes funding for the poison center, said the cuts were designed to preserve current services, minimize disruption and in some cases keep getting the state's flow of federal money by continuing to pay the required state matching funds.

"We want our tax dollars to stay here in Georgia in public health," Toomey told legislators in testimony last week. That may not always be possible. Geller said cutting his budget by \$49,000 or more would cost the state more than \$100,000 in federal matching funds. He said ideas about cutting less-urgent services such as outreach education wouldn't work because those services are legally required in order for the center to maintain its accreditation. Instead, where he can legally cut is front-line work: people who answer the phone, for example; or, he said, rabies triage.

If rabies triage were cut, that just means people fearing a rabies bite wouldn't have an expert who can advise them whether they really need a rabies shot. So they'd just get the shot out of caution. After receiving expert triage, about one-third of callers turn out to not need the \$10,000 to \$25,000 shot, Geller said, a big statewide savings.

"So if you want to cut our

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Lawmakers at Thursday's hearing on Gov. Brian Kemp's proposed budget cuts were firm in their intent to re-fund health programs, including poison control and maternal mortality. BOB ANDRES / HANDOUTS/BJC.COM

\$49,000," Geller said, "the state Medicaid (spending) will go up." A spokeswoman for Toomey's department said in an email, "The reduction of \$49,000 for Georgia Poison Center is a very small percentage of the more than \$1.2 million of state funding the Poison Center receives from DPH each year."

Others who testified included a hospital administrator in Swains-

boro worried that more unfunded mental health patients could show up in emergency rooms; a cancer research network concerned about continuing to connect cancer patients with research studies that could help them; and an advocate for sickle cell disease patients who fears cutting back a mobile testing unit that ventures into rural Georgia to look for the disease in people who are unlikely to go to the city for testing.

Lawmakers at the hearing were firm in their intent to re-fund health programs.

State Rep. Darlene Taylor, R-Thomaspville, said two of her great concerns were cuts to the poison control center, since many of her rural constituents have been helped after snakebites, and to maternal mortality funding.

"Dr. Toomey, I really, I hurt for her," Taylor said of the commissioner. "I've spoken to her offline. The great concern is there."

State Rep. Lee Hawkins, R-Gainesville, said he understood that Kemp had set his priorities. "And so to follow that, obviously we're having to move money from one place to another," Hawkins said. "Personally I just don't think health is the place we ought to be moving it from. We need more money for health, especially for mental health. So we're going to do what we can do to put the money back in there."

MORE DETAILS



DeKalb

Decatur, Dunwoody, Stone Mountain and others on Twitter: @dekalbnewsnow

CHAMBLEE

City launches economic development engine

Tracking down valuable information about the local economy, customers, competition and more just got easier for businesses in Chamblee, according to a press release. Chamblee's Department of Community and Economic Development, in partnership with LocalIntel, recently launched an economic development microsite, Chamblee Business Analytics: <https://chambleeega.ecdev.org/>

"The interactive tools display essential market intelligence for entrepreneurs and existing businesses and helps them ask the right questions, analyze data correctly and make better business decisions." The site is primarily intended for small to medium sized businesses who previously did not have the resources or experience to do their own market and location research, though businesses of all sizes and types will find it useful. Entrepreneurs now can discover their industries' primary customers, learn how to research their competition, identify industry trends, uncover future business opportunities and more.

"Data is only useful if it's easily accessible," said Catherine Lee, Chamblee Community and Economic Development Director. "That's why I'm so excited

Senior care

wright Quinn, the organization's director of government affairs,

half the 49 needed to cover 2,675 state-licensed care facilities across

PHASE:3

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

EDITORIAL